

MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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No. 3

Gerrit Roosen's Copy of Menno Simons' Writings

By IRVIN B. HORST

A Mennonite book of more than usual association interest is Gerrit Roosen's copy of Menno Simons' writings, the 1646 Dutch *Opera Menno Symons ofte Groot Sommarie*, preserved in the Schwenkfelder Library at Pennsburg, Pa. Gerrit Roosen, 1612-1711, was a well-known minister and elder of the Flemish Mennonite congregation at Hamburg. He was an influential leader among North German Mennonites and was the author of *Unschuld und Gegenbericht* (Ratzburg, 1702) and *Christliches Gemüthsgepräch*, the latter a much-printed catechism on both sides of the Atlantic.

Roosen's copy of Menno Simons' writings came into the Schwenkfelder Library from the Samuel W. Pennypacker collection. Dr. Elmer S. Johnson bought it along with many other Anabaptist-Mennonite books at public auction October 26-27, 1920, at Philadelphia. Pennypacker had been an assiduous book collector with a keen eye for valuable items. He purchased the Roosen copy from John F. Funk at Elkhart in 1877 at a time when Funk was in financial difficulties. Pennypacker recorded the provenance of the book on the recto side of the flyleaf immediately preceding the title page:

The first owner of this valuable copy of Menno Simons' works was Gerhard Roosen of Hamburg one of the most noted of the early Mennonite preachers and the author of the "Unschuld und Gegenbericht" "Gemüths Gespräch" and other books.¹ His life by B. K. Roosen was published in 1854 and a sketch with a copper plate portrait may be found in the Dutch edition of Schynn's [sic] history of 1743.² He died Nov 20 1711 in his 100th year. He has here made some notes of the greatest interest [...] on the second leaf of the preface he describes minutely the place of Menno's residence. In a note on folio 398 signed by him in 1671 he described a visit made by him with Tobias Govertz van den Wijngaert and Peter Jans Moyer in October 1549 [sic] to the dwelling place of Menno and says he was buried in his own cabbage garden. How the book passed from the possession of the Roosens I do not know but in 1808 Christian Nissely, an Amish Mennonite preacher brought it with him from Hesse Darmstadt to Ohio. Its successive owners were then Johannes Schlabbach, Manasseh and

Johannes M. Yoder the last of whom bought it for 18 cents and sold it to John F. Funk of Elkhart for two dollars. From I bought it in 1877.

Samuel W. Pennypacker
Philada July 6, 1878

There is no evidence in the book itself to support the information about ownership in the 19th century; Pennypacker may have received it orally from John F. Funk.

Roosen's ownership, as Pennypacker observes, is shown by the annotations which occur in his hand. These are three in number, all in Dutch, one of which is signed. The book also contains some brief notes in later Dutch and German hands, but they are not significant, except where they attempt to correct the data given by Roosen. Unfortunately the pages of the book were cropped during the process of rebinding. This does not affect the printed text but cuts into the marginal notes by Roosen. The present binding appears to

be early 19th-century American. In the cases of the first and third notes the cropping cuts away the final lines of the script, while the second note is seriously affected by lateral incision. This second note, which occurs on pages 363-65, consists of comment on Menno's views regarding the ban and shunning. Because practically every line of the script has missing portions no attempt was made to transcribe it.

Pennypacker informed J. G. de Hoop Scheffer, professor and historian at the Mennonite seminary at Amsterdam, of this association copy and sent him a transcription of the first and third notes. De Hoop Scheffer made use of the data in an article on Menno Simons in the *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* for 1881, where John Horsch also noted the information.³ It may be worth while to have these notes in an American source and to provide an English translation of them.

ANNOTATION BY ROOSEN—No. 1

(This note occurs on the verso of signature ***3. The text in parentheses represents alterations made by later hands; the material in brackets is notation by the present editor.)

Original

Menno Symons gebooren in den jaere 1492 (1494 oft int eerste van 1495) tot Witmaerssen een dorp in Vriesslant is a° 1517[?] een prediker monck geworden en (eerste) tot Pinningum [Pingjum] (daerna tot Witmaerssen) in Vriesslant en in den jaere 1531 (1534) oft 1532 wt het paussdom gegaen en het evangelium suyver en rein gepreedickt, als op fol. 473 tot 475 in dit boeck te lessen is, maer is daerom van de Romse gesinde vervolcht, naer syn leeven gestaen, gelt op syn lijf gestelt, also dat hy het ontflucht is, en vast omgesworven soo in Oostvrieslant / in Holstein in Meckelenberg tot Wismer / en ten lasten hem gestelt by Oldeslo in Holsteen, 6 mijl van Hamb-borg, 4 mijl van Lubeck, onder 't gebied van een Holster eedelman op Vresenborch residerend / Heeft eygentlyk gewoont in een dorp genoemt 't Woeste velt, daer is hy a° 1559 den 13 Jan [remainder of text fails]

Translation

Menno Simons born in the year 1492 (1494 or in the beginning of 1495) at Witmarsum, a village in Friesland, became a preacher-monk in 1517[?]



Gerrit Roosen, 1612-1711, Flemish Mennonite minister and author at Hamburg, Germany. This portrait etching was made in Holland in the early part of the 18th century, but is an authentic picture of the subject.

(first) at Pingjum (after that at Witmarsum) and in the year 1531 (1534) or 1532 renounced Catholicism and preached the unadulterated and pure gospel, as one can read on pages 473 to 475 in this book, but for this reason was persecuted by the Catholics, risked his life, had money placed on his head, also that he escaped and meanwhile roamed about in East Friesland, in Holstein, in Mecklenburg as far as Wismar, and finally established himself near Oldesloe in Holstein, six miles from Hamburg, four miles from Lübeck, on the territory of a Holstein nobleman who resided at the Vresenborch, [Menno] actually lived in a village named Wüstenfelde, where he [died] Anno 1559 on the 13th of January.

ANNOTATION BY ROOSEN—No. 3

(This note appears on page 398. The 1646 *Opera* is paginated, not foliated, as one might gather from both Roosen's and Pennypacker's notes. It follows immediately after the last lines of *Een grondelyk onderweys . . . van de excommunicatie* (*Instruction on Excommunication*) and the first lines refer to this tract.)

Original

onder het eygen gedruckte boeckken staet datum by my M.S. uwer aller dienmaer en broeder. A° 1558 den 11 Juny. het leste dat van hem in druck wtgegeven is en A° 1559 (1561) (den 13den January) is hy in den Heer ontslaepen by Oldeslo genaempt het Woeste Velt, gelegen tussen Hamborch en Lubeck, en is daer in syn eygen koolhoff begraven onder een Holstener edelman, die op thuy Vresenborch woonde. A° 1649 in oktober ben ick met Tobias Govers van Amsterdam, en Pieter Jansz Moyer van Lyden, byde oudsten wt Hollant, int weeroom comen van Lubeck op de plaets geweest daer hy gewoon heeft en begraven is, oudt 66 jaer. Geschreuen door my Geeritt Roosen 1671 in myn 60 jaer en [remainder of text fails]

Translation

On his own printed book the date appears: by me M.S. the servant and brother of you all, Anno 1558 the 11th of June, the last [book] from him that was published, and Anno 1559 (1561) (on the 13th of January) he died in the Lord at Oldesloe, called Wüstenfelde, and was buried there in his own cabbage garden, on the land of a Holstein nobleman who lived at the house Vresenborch. Anno 1649 in October, I, with Tobias Goverts from Amsterdam and Peter Jansz Moyer from Leyden, both elders from Holland, came again near Lübeck where he lived and was buried at the age of 66 years. Written by me Geeritt Roosen in my 60th year and

The student of Menno Simons will question the reliability of the data given here by Roosen, both in regard to the vital statistics and *Een grondelyk onderweys* as the last of his published writings. As Roosen indicates elsewhere his own family lived in the Wüstenfelde community

contemporary with Menno and he is therefore in a position to know what happened.⁴ The dates given in these notes agree with those remembered by Menno Simons' daughter as recorded by Pieter Jansz Twisck. However, in 1702, when Roosen published his *Unschuld und Gegenbericht*, he gave the date of Menno's death as January 31, 1561.⁵ Concerning these dates we may have more to say in another note.

¹ Roosen was also the author of *Evangelisches Glaubens-Bekändtniss der Taufgesinneten Christen* (n.p., 1702), and, according to Schyn, also wrote several hymns.

² B. K. Roosen, *Gerhard Roosen* (Hamburg, 1854). Schyn devotes more than a hundred pages to Roosen, recounting his

life, quoting from his works, and printing three poems written at the time of his death, Hermannus Schyn, *Geschiedenis dier Christenen welke in de Vereenigde Nederlanden onder de Protestanten Mennonieten genaamt worden* (Amsterdam, 1743-45), vol. 3, pp. 320-431.

³ J. G. de Hoop Scheffer, "Eenige opmerkingen en mededeelingen betreffende Menno Simons," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*, Jaargang 1881, pp. 36-39. John Horsch, *Menno Simons* (Scottsdale, Pa.), p. 18.

⁴ See G. Roosen "Wegen des Menno Simons Lebens-Lauff" in the appendix to *Unschuld und Gegenbericht* (Ratzeburg, 1702), pp. 97-98.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

April Meeting of the Historical Committee

The Historical Committee of General Conference meets annually. This year the committee, on invitation from Samuel S. Wenger, met at Paradise, Pa. The business meeting was held in the home of Milton H. Espenshade and the noon meal was served by the Wenger family in their home.

Those present were H. S. Bender, Ernest R. Clemens, J. C. Fretz, N. P. Springer (proxy for Melvin Gingerich), J. A. Hostetler, Ira D. Landis, Grant M. Stoltzfus, J. C. Wenger, Samuel S. Wenger, and J. C. Fretz.

The committee's membership of ten is appointed by General Conference. Three were absent: Harold Bauman, Paul Peachey, and Gideon G. Yoder. The committee co-opted two persons, Ernest R. Clemens and J. C. Fretz.

The following officers were elected: H. S. Bender, Chairman; J. C. Wenger, Secretary; and Ira D. Landis, Treasurer.

Items of business at this meeting taken from the secretary's minutes are the following:

- J. C. Fretz reported on the disposition of the papers of the late S. F. Coffman (1872-1954). In accordance with the provisions of Brother Coffman's will, the items relating more closely to Ontario are to be deposited with the Mennonite Conference of Ontario, the remainder to go to Goshen, Indiana, to the Archives of the Mennonite Church. Our chairman, H. S. Bender, urged that all papers which are to be left in Ontario should actually be committed to the care of the Mennonite Conference of Ontario for deposit in the archives; other members of the committee concurred.

Brother Fretz suggested that the S. F. Coffman materials which he deposited with the Acting Custodian of the Archives, together with any future materials delivered, be acknowledged to the Ontario Conference Historian, and that an additional copy be provided for the Coffman family. The committee gratefully received the report, and concurred with the suggestion of Brother Fretz on acknowledg-

ing the materials received by the Goshen Archives.

- John A. Hostetler exhibited the Alberta-Saskatchewan Conference Historian's book (handwritten and illustrated) of the late Ezra Stauffer. The committee instructed the chairman of the committee to negotiate for the deposit of this book in our church archives.
- The chairman gave a review of the present state of the *Täuferakten* which include the following, published or projected:
 2. Wuertemberg, I, II
 3. Baden-Palatinate
 4. Hesse
 5. Bavaria
 6. Zurich
 7. Bern
 8. Bern Disputation, 1538
 9. E. Switzerland
 - 10, 11. Alsace, I, II
 - 12, 13, 14, 15. Hutterites, I, II, III, IV
 - 16, 17, 18. Austria, I, II, III
 19. Rhineland
 20. Hans Denk's writings
- J. C. Wenger gave a report on the current Mennonite History Essay Contest for 1955-56.
- For the general guidance of the judges it was agreed that both the research reflected, and the literary quality in evidence, should be considered, with a relatively higher consideration being given to research as one moves up from Class III to Class I.
- The chairman read [a] letter of Dr. Alta Schrock, soliciting the moral support of our committee for her plan to write a fictionalized biography of Bishop Jacob S. Miller.
- Moved and passed to appoint John A. Hostetler, chairman, Harold S. Bender, and Grant M. Stoltzfus as a committee to encourage and aid such possible projects as those of Dr. Schrock.
- Moved and passed to authorize the treasurer to set up a "Literary Fund" to aid in such projects as those of Dr. Schrock, to receive and disburse gifts for this cause.

District Conference Historians

The editor has made an attempt to compile a list of District Conference historians. At no time has he seen a list anywhere in print. Most of the conferences have appointed a historian for some years. A few have done so recently. Any changes or corrections to the list should be reported to the editor.

The duties of the conference historian were published in the October, 1955, issue and were reprinted in leaflet form. Any who desire additional copies may send their request to the editor or to any of the members of the Historical Committee.

District Conference Historians

Conference	Historian
Alberta-Saskatchewan	to be supplied
Allegheny	John A. Hostetler, Scottdale, Pa.
Conservative Mennonite	Ivan J. Miller, Grantsville, Md.
Franconia	Ben Hess,* RFD, Souderton, Pa.
Illinois	No one appointed presently
Indiana-Michigan	John C. Wenger, 1410 S. Eighth Street, Goshen, Ind.
Iowa-Nebraska	to be supplied in 1956
Lancaster	Ira D. Landis, Route 1, Bareville, Pa.
North Central	Melvin P. Hochstetler, Wolford, N. Dak.
Ohio and Eastern	Gerald Studer, Box 326, Smithville, Ohio
Ontario	Chairman of Historical Committee
Ontario Amish Mennonite	J. C. Fretz, Box 401, Kitchener, Ont.
Pacific Coast	No one appointed
South Central	U. E. Kenagy, Nebergall Sp. Road, Albany, Oregon
South Pacific	Kenneth King, Hesston, Kans.
Virginia	Ervin B. Jennings, 2231 Tyler Avenue, Fresno, Calif.
Washington Co., Maryland, and Franklin Co., Pennsylvania	Grant Stoltzfus, Chairman; H. A. Brunk and Timothy Showalter, Historical Committee
	no one appointed

* Chairman of congregational historians in the conference

The Bergey Family

By D. H. BERGEY, M.D., Philadelphia, Family Historian

John Ulric Berge, the Immigrant

The exact date of emigration and the place whence Hans Ulrich Berge and his wife Anne Mary came have not been ascertained, but it is most probable that they came originally from Germany and emigrated to Pennsylvania to escape religious persecution and to establish a home for their descendants in the province of William Penn, where liberty of conscience was assured to them in his frame of government, and where the fertility of the soil and the low price of land assured abundant reward for the industrious farmer and a home for his descendants for generations to come.

John Ulric Berge purchased 250 acres of land in Lower Salford township, Philadelphia (now Montgomery) county, of Hugh Roberts and Rachel, his wife, on March 15, 1726. Nearly two years later he sold a hundred acres of this tract to Jacob Enger. The remainder he retained until his death, when he devised it to his second son, Michael.

Very little is known directly of the character of John Ulric Berge, but we know a number of facts concerning his life and activities which permit us to conjecture the qualities he possessed. These facts are contained in the records of the local government and elsewhere and are therefore authentic.

John Ulric Berge and his wife were Mennonites. This fact is established from the records of the Lower Salford Mennonite church, from which we learn that John Ulric Berge was one of the organizers of the congregation in 1738. A large proportion of his descendants are of the same faith today.

In 1738 Christopher Dock, the pioneer schoolmaster among the Mennonites, opened a school in the Lower Salford Mennonite church. This fact shows that the members of this congregation were imbued with the importance of education in the training of their children and in this manner secured for them advantages practically equal to those obtainable anywhere in the province at that early date.

In 1756 John Ulric Berge was one of the overseers of the poor in Lower Salford township, and in 1760 he was road supervisor. These facts show that he was a man of influence in the township and that he did not disregard his duty to the local government. It is probable that in those early days the office more frequently sought the man than is the case at the present day, and in consequence the incumbent felt it all the more his duty to give to the community that conscientious service which the office entailed.

An additional evidence of the high esteem with which John Ulric Berge was regarded by his neighbors is the frequency with which we find his name mentioned in wills and similar documents,

24. J. A. Hostetler gave a report on the papers of the late Ammon Kaufman. Mrs. Kaufman desires said papers to be deposited in the Archives of the Mennonite Church; they are currently in the possession of Sanford Shetler.
25. J. A. Hostetler reported on the prospective history of the Mennonite Publishing House.
26. H. S. Bender reported that he hopes to be released from teaching the first semester of 1956-57 to write the history of the Mennonites in America.
27. Agreed to meet at Goshen Saturday, April 6, 1957 (tentative date).
28. The chairman gave a report of the *Christian Classics* volume [Westminster Press] on the Anabaptists and other groups, and renewed his concern to see our own *Anabaptist Reader* published.
29. The committee asked John A. Hostetler to prepare a list of names for a new series of biographical sketches of Mennonite leaders in the *Gospel Her-*

- ald*. There was also interest expressed in a book of biographical sketches.
30. Grant M. Stoltzfus reported on the papers of L. J. Heatwole, the late Virginia bishop and church leader. The committee agreed to bring to the attention of the family the policy statement of the committee on the disposition of such papers, adopted in the 1955 meeting of our committee. The committee appointed Grant M. Stoltzfus to represent it in dealing with the heirs of L. J. Heatwole.
31. The committee agreed to recognize S. S. Wenger as its representative to the 1957 Sixth Mennonite World Conference [in Germany].
32. J. C. Wenger reported that the diaries of the late Bishop N. E. Miller have been preserved by the family.
33. S. S. Wenger announced that J. C. Wenger is delivering four addresses on our heritage at the Paradise, Pa., Mennonite Church, tonight and tomorrow.

wherein he is commissioned to oversee the settlement of estates and directed to act as guardian of orphans. It is especially interesting that he served with Bishop Henry Funk as a trustee under the will of Dielman Kolb, being therefore in very intimate and friendly relations with both Kolb and Funk, who supervised the translation of van Braght's "Book of Martyrs" from the Dutch into the German language.

John Ulric Berge died in 1762, and his wife Anne Mary some years later. Both are buried in the graveyard of the Lower Salford Mennonite church, but their graves are unmarked save by common field stones.

A Numerous and Widely Scattered Progeny

The descendants of John Ulric Berge are now very numerous, extending in most branches of the family to the eighth and ninth generations. Of his six sons, five were married, and most of the descendants of four of these have been traced. Of his five daughters, four were married, but the descendants of only one of these have been ascertained. The descendants of only five of his children have thus far been traced, yet about 5,000 direct descendants have been found.

The prevailing calling of the descendants of John Ulric Berge is, as might be expected, some division of agriculture. This appears to be the family characteristic and is maintained largely even by those branches of the family that have emigrated to the western states and to Canada.

With a progenitor of such pronounced religious belief and practice, the descendants should show evidences of the transmission of this attitude of mind, and the records collected show that at least twenty-six of the lineal descendants were and are ministers of the Gospel. This is a creditable number when we reflect that for the first four or five generations the

greater portion of the members of the family were Mennonites and that the selection of ministers in this denomination is solely by casting lots. The records also show the names of fifteen ministers of the Gospel who married into the family.

The records show the names of twelve physicians who are lineal descendants, and eight others who married into the family. In the same manner all other honorable callings have been taken up by the members of the family.

The Mennonites are opposed to war and avoid military service from principle, yet one of the sons of John Ulrich Berge served in the Revolutionary army and three of his grandsons served in the local militia during that trying period. A number of the descendants participated in the Civil War and earned honorable records.

Reunions of the Bergey Family

In 1900 the Bergey family held its first reunion and it has held a meeting each year since then. The principal objects which the promoters of the family reunion had in view were: the collection of data pertaining to the lives and activities of their ancestors, and to promulgate those sterling qualities of mind which characterized their fathers and mothers. It was believed that the family association had a legitimate place alongside the church, school, and press in the upbuilding of character and the advancement of the welfare of humanity. Each passing year strengthens the belief that the association can fulfill this function by attracting to itself the influence and co-operation of those who are capable of carrying out a work of such far-reaching nature. In the association all can meet on common ground and for the moment lay aside what might appear to others as nonessential, and thus by their united labors the elevation of mankind to a higher and broader plane will eventually be consummated.—*The Pennsylvania German*, November, 1906.

married young people, the boys and girls showed very little interest in the work of the church either by their attendance or open expression. The members of the churches saw a need—to interest the young people, and so the first Sunday school was started by David Gascho, in 1884, at Wellesley. The initial purpose of the Sunday school was to teach "German" to the young people and so increase an interest in the German preaching. The books used for the Sunday school were the German "A.B.C." books.³ Indeed, this was a beginning of a Sunday-school movement and the capturing of the interest of the young people. It is hardly to be expected that the early leaders anticipated such a rewarding and successful achievement as the Sunday school has proved to be over the period of years since its beginning.

In 1900, a Sunday school was started by two brethren by the name of Menno Kuepfer and Chris Schrag at Blake. This Sunday school met until about the year 1912. In 1914, a newly organized school was opened by John Gerber and Sol. Baechler. On Sunday afternoon, January 12, 1902, the first Sunday school of the Poole church was held. John Ropp led in devotion, reading from Phil. 2, and led in prayer. The lesson for January 12 was, "Pouring Out of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:1-11.⁴

The first Sunday school was held in the 16th line East Zorra church on May 17, 1903. Solomon M. Bender, Chris Ruby, Sr., and David Bender served as the first superintendents of this school. The Sunday school at Wilmot's two churches, Steinman's and St. Agatha, opened in 1906. The first superintendents of this Sunday school were Chris Gascho and Chris Litwiller. The ministers of this congregation led the devotions for the Sunday-school period occasionally for about a year.

The Sunday schools recorded so far used as their textbook the German A.B.C. and the New Testament. The German A.B.C. book served the purpose of teaching German to the young people and the boys and girls and later the New Testament was used as a Scriptural text. These schools later adopted the International Sunday School Lessons as published by the Mennonite Publishing House. But it is not definite when the change came about; in fact, it wasn't a sudden change-over.

On November 3, 1921, a number of Sunday-school superintendents met to discuss and plan for a Sunday-school conference. The object of a Sunday-school conference was to discuss openly ways and methods to overcome difficulties in Sunday-school work and to further the cause among the young people. This discussion of interested Sunday-school workers became a reality and a conference was held on May 24, 25, 1922. The program included some very interesting talks and a copy of the program is preserved by my father, N. S. Bender. The guest speaker was Eli Frey from Ohio. The

A History of the Sunday Schools of the Ontario Amish Mennonite Conference

EZRA J. BENDER

It is probably a true saying that the Sunday school has contributed more to the spiritual well-being of the church than any other organization within the church. In some congregations of the conference there had been an organized church service for as long as 66-80 years before a Sunday school was started, while in other congregations there had been church services for 16-52 years before a Sunday school was organized.¹

The Wilmot congregation, which consists of two churches, the church at St. Agatha and the church located two miles east of New Hamburg called the Steinman church, was started in 1826, by a group of Amish Mennonites from Germany and Alsace who left Europe to

escape military training. In the years that followed some more families moved in from Pennsylvania and Europe and the other congregations of the conference were organized. Among this group was Christian Ropp, who heard of the promise given to Christian Nafziger, by the Government of Canada, a promise of military exemption.²

The language of the members of the churches was German and so the preaching on a Sunday morning was German. As I mentioned in a previous statement, for a number of years the church service was a preaching service and so employed little or no talent of the young people. This was detrimental to the interest of the young people and as a result the un-

conference of the Sunday schools is an annual event.

The Sunday school that was organized at East Zorra church spread in the year 1935. On May 5, a Sunday school was opened in a vacant Methodist church which was about five miles southeast of the 16th line East Zorra church. Henry Brenneman and C. K. Bender served as the first superintendents of this Sunday school. This is rather interesting that from here on it is the Sunday school that advances and pushes into new areas whereas in the other schools the church service was organized for some time before a Sunday school. This Sunday school meets every week and a regular church service is organized here. In 1942, a Sunday school was started in a rented Presbyterian church in Tavistock. This church has since been sold and the East Zorra congregation built a new building in Tavistock and therefore at present there are three Sunday schools separately organized.

On July 14, 1946, Menno Zehr of the Poole congregation and Valentine Nafziger from the Wellesley congregation

started a Sunday school at Millbank. This Sunday school has since been meeting every week and a church is now organized at this place. In 1948, several families moved into a new district, a district which probably knew very little about Mennonites. On April 18, Wilfred Schlegel started a Sunday school at Nairn, which is in Middlesex County, near the city of London. This Sunday-school movement has since grown and was organized on March 6, 1949, as the Nairn church. In 1948, a Sunday school was started or maybe resulted from a community summer Bible school held in the city of Stratford. On October 2, 1949, a Sunday school was started by Arlan Erb and Solomon Bast at Crosshill. In 1952, a Sunday school was started in the village of Wellesley. This is an effort of several interested young people from the Wellesley congregation. In 1953, a Sunday school was started in the city of London. This work is in charge of John Wagler.

At the present time there are fourteen Sunday schools which have been started by churches in the conference.

during the week and my church and Sunday school services on Sunday. At that time I was a S.S. scholar in one Sunday school, a teacher in another, and superintendent in a third Sunday school. Besides attending to these three Sunday schools, I also attended each Sunday two church services, one in the forenoon and the other in the evening. Sunday in this way was for me a busy day, but was what I enjoyed.

One beautiful sunshiny Sunday morning, the last Sunday in May 1863, I was told that there was someone at the door of my boarding house who asked to see me, and going to the door saw standing before me the old Mennonite Bishop John M. Brenneman. When I asked him to come in the house and make himself at home with us, he told me that he was in company with the aged minister, Peter Nissley, of Lancaster Co., Pa. They had been visiting some of the small Mennonite congregations in the west and among the congregations the one at Sterling, Ill., and after holding communion with them, they had started away on Saturday morning with the intention of getting to Elida, Ohio, to the home of Bro. Brenneman and Bro. Nissley was to be his guest over Sunday and would preach there. But when they came to Chicago the Saturday trains had all left and there was no train to take them to Elida until late on Sunday afternoon. All they could do was to remain in Chicago over Sunday.

It was for them indeed a sad disappointment, but it has been a comfort to me and one of the happy events of my life that God had so ordered it as you will see in the events following.

I took pleasure in entertaining the brother, took him along to church service and brought him back with me for dinner. Brother Nissley had relatives or friends residing on Michigan Avenue with whom he had spent the night and after dinner he also came to see me. The two brethren were not pronounced friends of Sunday schools of which fact I was well aware and so I had to use prudence in taking them to a place which their church rules did not sanction. I told them this was a special day, the anniversary of the establishing of the school. I was the superintendent and we had made special preparations for the service, and as the superintendent I had to be there and asked them kindly to go with me. Without any objection they at once consented to accompany me and I felt glad to have them. They never said a word to me against Sunday schools. They seemed rather pleased with the talk, the singing and the teaching, and a little later I had a letter from Bro. Nissley, which praised my work and bid me God's blessing on the work I was doing, which was a matter of great enjoyment to me.

(This address was copied from a notebook in the John F. Funk collection in the Mennonite Church Archives. The date and place of the address are not given. The material above was slightly edited by Melvin Gingerich.)

An Address by John F. Funk

Second Talk

Beloved friends:

Two weeks ago the 28th day of May was to me a special day, and on that account I was really sorry that we could not meet as first arranged. From another standpoint I was glad that the Lord in His wise providence had arranged the matter. I am feeling that the Lord's way is always the best, and we have the blessed assurance that what God doeth is always well done.

I was going in that day to tell you whatever the 28th day of May is to you, it is a very special day to me.

In 1862, in the month of October, at the time of the Indiana State Conference, I made my first visit to Elkhart and Elkhart County—my first visit to the Mennonite people of this locality and attended for the first time in my life the Mennonite meeting at Yellow Creek. Remember this was in the fall of 1862.

It was a very remarkable meeting to me as well as to many others. I was then "that young fellow from Chicago." They didn't know my name so they distinguished me from all the other visitors here at that time but I did not know it until many years after.

I had intended to be present at that conference, but did not get here to Yellow Creek until the conference was over.

The conference was then held, if I remember right, on the second Friday in October. Saturday, the day following the conference, was the day for baptismal

services and on this occasion 48 persons, mostly young men, as it was then yet in the early part of the Civil War and the young men were all subject to be drafted into the service, and the government had passed a law that all "Conscientious Objectors" (as they were called in the late war) belonging to a church whose principles were opposed to warfare could pay a fine of \$300 in lieu of service and remain at home, and this was to some extent a reason that so many were baptized at that time and received into church membership. It was indeed a grand sight to see so many unite with the people of God and gave me a very favorable and encouraging idea of the Mennonite Church in Indiana.

The day following was Sunday, and for the Yellow Creek church communion day and drew together an immense crowd of people and over 600 brethren and sisters participated in the communion and foot-washing. I shall never forget that meeting and the few days we spent together here at this place and I rejoiced in my heart for these happy experiences of a living faith and religion.

Here I became acquainted with Bishop John M. Brenneman of Elida, Allen Co., Ohio. He was the bishop that did most of the preaching and officiated in the baptismal services and the communion services.

I went back to my home in Chicago and attended to my work in the lumber office

Clergy and Laity

A SUGGESTION

BY J. HORSCH

Noticing that in a recent number of the *Herald of Truth*, I am made to use the word *laymember*, I take this occasion to say without wishing to be fault-finding in any way that the use of this word in speaking of one of the brotherhood does not appear to me to be appropriate.

Webster gives the following definitions: "*lay*, of or pertaining to the laity, as distinct from the clergy"; "*laity*, the people as distinguished from the clergy." The word *clergy* is derived from the Latin word for priest, *clericus*, and means priesthood. It is in use only in the Roman Catholic Church, and the church most closely related to it, viz., the Episcopalian. *Laity* for brotherhood presupposes the use of *clergy*, or priesthood for the ministry. Both words belong together and if there is no clergy, we cannot consistently speak of a laity. If it is right to use the one term, the other can be used with equal right.

Laity is derived from a Greek word which often has the meaning of unlearned or ignorant, and even in English the word is used in that sense. The reason why this word has in the Roman Church been substituted for the New Testament term brotherhood, or congregation, is obvious. Ignorance in things divine was one of the requirements of church-membership, knowledge of the Bible by the congregation was the thing dreaded most by the priests. They alone claimed the right

to be learned in spiritual things, alone claimed to have the wisdom to understand the Holy Scriptures and the authority to be administrators of divine grace. They desired to fix a great gulf between themselves and the congregations.

It is, as a matter of fact, evident that when this term has been used among us as Mennonites, it was not by any means with the intention to convey such ideas. The thought, however, suggests itself that it would be well to avoid words, which in their true sense convey wrong meanings.

Speaking of this it may not be out of place to call attention to another matter which has previously been brought up in the *Herald*. The prefixing of the term

Saint to the names of the apostles and evangelists is a remnant of Roman Catholic saint cult. It would be more consistent to prefix this word to the names of all saints, but it would not be according to Scriptural precept. The Apostle Peter in speaking of Paul speaks of him as "our dear brother Paul." Although every true Christian is, in New Testament language, a saint, yet to use this term as a title is not Scriptural. The reason why we never hear anybody speak of Saint Cornelius or Saint Lydia, or Saint Menno Simons, is not that these persons were not saints, but that they were never declared to be such by the Romish pope. Although even in the English Bible the term *saint* is used in the headings when the names of the apostolic writers are mentioned, this is by no means the case in the original Greek. Our forefathers were very careful not to make themselves guilty of this sort of inconsistencies.

—Madison, Wis. *Herald of Truth*
(Dec. 15, 1898).

Mennonite Camp Meeting

An Editorial in the Herald of Truth
(Sept. 1, 1889)

In an exchange we read the notice of a camp meeting under the above caption, and herewith enter our protest against the use of the word in this connection. The camp meeting is a thing unknown among orthodox Mennonites. The discipline of the Mennonite church does not recognize anything of this kind; in fact absolutely prohibits it. And it sounds very strange indeed, to hear any one speak or to read of a Mennonite camp meeting. The Mennonites have houses wherein they worship, and so have most other churches, and it would be well if all the houses of worship of the Mennonites as well as of other de-

nominations, could be well filled at each time of service. There was a time when it was necessary for people to hold their worship in the woods, in caves, or some hidden, out-of-the-way place, in order to avoid being discovered by the persecutors. That necessity does not now exist, and he who desires in quietude and in the fear of the Lord to edify his soul and enjoy communion with God and with his fellow saints, will rather seek the quiet services of God's house than the boisterous and exciting scenes that usually accompany the services of the camp meeting.

(For additional items on the same subject, see *Herald of Truth*, 1879, p. 215; and 1881, p. 155.—Ed.)

Letter to J. E. Hartzler

PerKasie, Pa.
Sept. 24, 1917

Rev. J. E. Hartzler
Goshen, Indiana

Dear Brother,

I am glad that one young man of my Sunday school class is taking course in your college. Bro. Kratz is a nice quiet humble, good behavior young Christian man.

As you know that lots of our people in Bucks and Montg. Co. are not interested in the college as they ought to be. It will depend a great deal how Bro. Clayton Kratz will return at the end of his term.

I hope that Bro. Kratz will make a success and will stay Christ like. And that more of my class will take a course in the college. We would be glad to have you to pay us a visit and preach for us at Blooming Glen and PerKasie.

Yours truly,

William M. Moyer

(Original letter in the Archives of the Mennonite Church)

Westmoreland-Fayette Historical Society

John A. Hostetler was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Westmoreland-Fayette Historical Society for a five-year term. He succeeds Grant Stoltzfus who served in that office from 1951 until 1956. The two-county Pennsylvania historical group maintains the Museum and Historical House at West Overton (between Scottsdale and Mount Pleasant) which was settled in 1800 by Henry Oberholtzer of Eastern Pennsylvania and his company of about thirty souls.

One of the sons of Henry Oberholtzer was Abraham (Overholt) who is credited with being the first discoverer and user of coal in this section of the county. A number of Abraham Overholt's descendants became outstanding leaders in the industrial life in western Pennsylvania. According to Edward Yoder (*M.Q.R.* July, 1941) the coal mining industry, manufac-

turing of coke and smelting of iron ore, began to be developed in Westmoreland and Fayette counties extensively by 1870. Two prominent men whose names are associated with the development of these industries were Abraham O. Tintman and Henry Clay Frick, both of whom were grandsons of Abraham and Maria (Stauffer) Overholt. Frick's fortune at his death was estimated at one hundred million.

Henry Clay Frick (1848-1919) was the son of Elizabeth Overholt and John W. Frick and was born at West Overton, the present site of the Westmoreland-Fayette Historical Society Museum. Also located in a large dwelling on the grounds is a Mennonite room with artifacts of long ago. The Museum contains a large number of local documents, tools, crafts, and implements of the region.

A Genealogical Trip to Switzerland

By OSCAR KUHN, *Author of "German and Swiss Settlements of Pennsylvania," etc.*

In the summer of 1900 I went abroad with the intention of spending a year there. One of the things I wanted to do was to visit those parts of Switzerland from which came the early settlers of Lancaster County, among whom was my ancestor, Bishop John Herr. The original home of these settlers, though many had lingered a number of years in the Palatinate, was in the cantons of Berne and Zürich. In the fall of 1900 I spent the month of October in the delightful old city of Berne, working in the city library and making trips to the outlying country.

It was a matter of interest to me to see how many Lancaster County names are to be found in the graveyards of canton Berne. Thus in the little town of Muri I found the following names on the tombstones: Bürki, Rohrer, Strahm, Maurer, Brechbühl and Gerber. In the directory of the village of Lauperswyl, the names Berger, Bieri, and Stauffer occur; in Eggiswyl Neukomm, Gaumann, Hochstetter, Holdiman, Galli; in Lützelbühl Flückiger and Schürch; in Langnau, Aeschlimann and Wisler; in Diessbach, Rüeeggsegger and Krähenbühl.

The chief object, however, of my visit to Switzerland was the village of Langnau, in the Emmenthal, a few miles from the city of Berne. I had read with great interest the book on *Die Bernischen Täufer* by Pastor Müller of that place, and had determined to visit him.

In his book he gives an account of the circumstances which led to the large emigration of the Mennonites of the Emmenthal in 1709-10, many of whom later migrated to America and formed the first white settlement in Lancaster County, under Bishop John Herr and Martin Kindig.

Among these emigrants were Ulrich Fahrni, of Schwarzenegg; Bendicht Maurer, of Diessbach; Heinrich Wenger, of Moglenburg; Martin Strahm, of Hochstetten; Peter Gerber and his wife, Verena Aeschlimann, of Langnau; Nikolas Baumgartner, of Trub; Hans Wisler, of Langnau; Daniel Neukomm, of Eggiswyl; Katherine Haldimann, of Hochstetten; Barbara Rohrer, of Bolligen; Hans Schallenberg and Elizabeth Neuenschwander, of Trub; Hans Hauri, of Lenzburg; Maria Vögli, of Herzogenbuchsee; Peter Krähenbühl and Barbara Rüeeggsegger, of Diessbach; Hans Zürcher, of Frutigen, and others.

It was the fifteenth of October when I took the train from Berne for Langnau. The day was beautiful, the country superb. Everywhere stretched the luxuriant grass like a green velvet carpet. Hill and valley, river and stream, picturesque villages and lonely houses made a varied landscape of ever-changing interest, while on the distant horizon one could see the high mountains of the Bernese *Oberland*, covered with snow. Surely no fairer country could be found in the world.

I was kindly received by Pastor Müller, took dinner with him in his spacious *chalet*, and after visiting the church, went to the town hall, where the church books of the district are preserved from 1555 down to the present.

I had a really delightful time in the sunny, clean and cheerful room, turning over these old volumes containing the names of the ancestors of so many Lancaster County families. Here I found that in 1556 were baptized Peter, son of Bendicht Aeschlimann, and Verena, daughter of Oswald Zürcher; in 1557, Hans, son of Christian Brechbühl; in 1558, Uoli Zoug (Zug); in 1562, Peter Kräyenbühl, and so on.

Among the other names were Oberli, Kündig, Frantz, Haldiman, Bichsel, Boss, Stram, Schenk, Gutt, Leeman, Longenegger, Gerber, Lantz.

After spending the afternoon with Pastor Müller in visiting the town and surrounding country of Langnau and the Emmenthal I took the train back to Bern, having spent a most delightful day in the original home of many of our Lancaster County families.

In the library at Bern I found a number of old books and manuscripts dealing with the Swiss Mennonites, both in the cantons of Bern and Zürich. As is well known, many of the Pennsylvania Mennonites came also from Zürich. It was not till the following spring that I found the opportunity of visiting that city. I came up from Italy in the month of May and spent two weeks working in the *Stadtbibliothek* and taking trips to the villages whence the Mennonites originally came.

Here in the old Latin chronicles I could read how "*Johannes Landis Tigurinus* (of Zurich) anno 1614 *decollatus erat et sua bona confiscata fuerant*,"* how Hans and Stephan Zehnder and Heinrich Frick were haled before the magistrates. Similar mention was made of Mennonites named Baumgartner, Ringier, Bachmann, Brupacher, Egli, Müller, etc.

Among the interesting books in manuscript in the Zürich library is a large folio *Zürcher Geschlechter-Buch*, with hand-painted coats of arms. Here are to be found the families Aebli, Armbruster, Ap-

penzeller, Böckli, Boxx, Brennemann, Bruner, Gerwer, Kündig, Landis, Meili and others.

Another book is entitled *Eine ausführliche Relation oder Beschreibung aus Carolina*, printed in Bern, 1742.

About this time so many Swiss were emigrating to Pennsylvania that the government thought it necessary to take measures to put a stop to it. One way of doing this was to frighten would-be colonists by painting the danger of such voyages. Hence the following pamphlet (in the Zürich library): "*Eine Leyder Wahrhaftige traurige Geschichte und Beschreibung wie im nächst abgewichenem Monat Julii, dieses noch lauffenden 1754sten Jahres, Ein grosses Schiff nach West Indien mit 468 personen, welche von Rotterdam in die neue Welt abgefahren, zwischen Pennsylvania und Philadelphia aber Zimmerlich untergangen und zerscheitert, mithin schier alle darauf befundene Seelen ein lamentables Ende genommen. Welche wahre Geschichte nach gethaner Relation auch von einer poetischen Feder ist beschrieben worden in diesem Jahr 1754.*"

In 1735 a description of a journey from Zürich to America by Ludwig Weber was published. Among those who are mentioned here as going to Pennsylvania are Heinrich, Jacob and Kilian Dufendörffer aus Bassenstorf. These are probably the ancestors of many of the Dieffenderfer family.

In the manuscript book of decrees passed by the authorities of Zürich are to be found "mandates" under the years 1734, 1735, 1736, etc., forbidding anyone to leave the land without special permission, also threatening with punishment the "öftern im Land herum ziehende Aufwiegler und Verführer zu solch gefährlichen und verderblichen Reisen."

The above is a very brief sketch of some of the interesting facts that I learned in my trip to Switzerland. It is beyond doubt that there in the villages around Berne and Zürich the ancestors of many Pennsylvania-German families lived for centuries before going to America. The reader, however, must be warned that it is well-nigh impossible to connect the original colonist in Pennsylvania with the family in Switzerland.

—*The Pennsylvania German*
(Nov. 1906)

*"Was beheaded and his goods were confiscated."

History of the Berlin Congregation, Ontario

The old frame meetinghouse at Berlin, Ont., erected in 1834, on the site of the old log meetinghouse erected in 1813, is, according to an item in a Berlin, Ont., paper, soon to be only a memory. At a business meeting of the members of the congregation on the 26th of December it was decided to tear down the old building in the spring to make room for a commodious brick building.

In this connection it may be of some interest to give a short sketch of this

(Eby's) meetinghouse and the congregation that was organized early in the last century. For several years from 1801 there was no minister there to attend to the spiritual needs of the new colony, nevertheless the brethren met in their humble abodes in the forest and some brother, usually Samuel Betzner or Joseph Scherch (Sherk) would read a chapter from the Martyr's Mirror or more often from Bish. Heinrich Funck's well-known "Erklärung" and Menno Simons' "Fun-

damentbuch," which works were then prized very highly by our people. In this way they sought to edify one another.

In course of time Bro. Joseph Bechtel was ordained to the ministry and, according to Dr. Aaron Eby, was the first Mennonite minister in Waterloo Co. On the 27th of November, 1809, Benjamin Eby, sixth son of Christian and Catharine (Bricker) Eby of Warwick Twp., Lancaster Co., Pa., where he was born May 2, 1785, was chosen and ordained to the ministry, he having been baptized and received into fellowship on May 4, 1804, at Conestoga meetinghouse, Lancaster Co., Pa., by Bish. Chr. Burkholder. The ordination probably took place at some private house, in the "Eby settlement" as the vicinity of the present city of Berlin was then known. On the 11th of October 1812, he was ordained to the office of bishop. Through his indefatigable efforts the new colony finally agreed, in 1813, to erect a meetinghouse, the congregation having become too large to be accommodated in even the largest private house. It was built of logs and was called "Eby's Versammlungs-haus." In this building Bish. Eby for a number of years taught school during the winter months. Very few indeed are the pupils still living who attended school there.

As the congregation continued to grow the log meetinghouse in time became too small, and was replaced in 1834 by a frame building, at that time one of the largest houses of worship in that part of the country. After Bish. Eby's death, June 28, 1853, his fifth son Christian, born in 1821, was ordained in 1854, and was a well-known and beloved pastor until his death in 1859. Other ministers and bishops in charge of or assistants in the ministerial work in this congregation: Bish. Joseph Hagey, born, June 11, 1810; ordained minister May 31, 1851; bishop, October 11, 1852; died, Dec. 31, 1876. Pre. Moses Erb, born Aug. 6, 1821; ordained, April 14, 1851; died July 31, 1901. Pre. Jacob M. Oberholtzer, born March 30, 1800, ordained in his youth and died Jan. 14, 1879. Pre. John Steckley, born Nov. 25, 1802, ordained as a young man, and died April 22, 1879. Pre. Elias Snyder, born Sept. 3, 1815, ordained in 1874, and died Apr. 24, 1890. Bish. Daniel Wismer, born July 29, 1820, ordained minister over 35 years ago, and bishop some years later in Kansas, but now resides in Berlin, Ont. Pre. Abraham C. Weber, born March 14, 1817; ordained Dec. 22, 1864; died July 6, 1874. Bish. Elias Weber, born Feb. 22, 1834, ordained, first deacon, then to the ministry and, after the death of Bish. Jos. Hagey in 1876, to the office of bishop. Bish. Amos Cressman, born Sept. 4, 1834, ordained deacon June 19, 1854; minister, June 30, 1867; bishop, Jan. 24, 1875. Pre. Samuel Bowman, born July 15, 1834, ordained, Feb. 2, 1878. Bish. Jonas Snider, born Oct. 2, 1858, ordained minister June 24, 1892; and bishop a few years later.

Pre. E. S. Hallman is the latest addition to the ministerial force of the congregation, he having been ordained less than

ten years ago. The congregation suffered a rupture, in common with other congregations in the United States and Canada, when, about thirty years ago under the leadership of several prominent men, among them Solomon Eby, a dissatisfied and expelled minister in the Mennonite congregation, a new body was formed which, after various amalgamations with other small bodies, finally assumed the name of Mennonite Brethren in Christ. The Eby congregation has formed

the nucleus from which a number of congregations in Waterloo Twp. were organized, and although in this manner the number was from time to time decreased, it has prospered and the membership today numbers probably in the neighborhood of 200 souls. May God prosper the work as carried on in the church, Sunday school and young people's meeting and give the church a large growth in number and spiritual power.

—*Herald of Truth* (Jan. 15, 1902, p. 18)

Singers' Table

BY EARL B. GROFF

Remember when the "Singers' Table" was in use in Mellinger Church?

This part of our worship service was discontinued years ago and was never used in our present building. In the old church building the pulpit was located in the end of the building toward the highway. The "Singers' Table" was placed endwise against the front of the pulpit, thus the pulpit became the cross or the head of a T-shaped arrangement. Around this table the best singers of the congregation sat, usually six or seven, leading out and carrying the tune for all the singing. These singers remained seated and all singing was congregational. Then, as now, some selections were made by the ministry and others by the singers themselves. The singing was in both English and German. Small songbooks that contained only the words of the song were used. It contained no notes or music.

We have been unable to learn just when the use of this "Singers' Table" was discontinued. As near as we can tell, it must have been shortly after the turn of the century, as our minister, David L. Landis, reports that it was no longer used at the time of his ordination in 1911.

Jonas Buckwalter—whose life span was 1820-1912. He was the father of Henry and Milton Buckwalter and the grandfather of Katie M. Buckwalter, a member of our congregation.

David N. Lefever (1824-1904). He lived on a property on the Old Factory Road which today is known as the Paul Miller greenhouse property. He was a great-uncle of Mrs. Elias (Lizzie) Lefever.

Tobias R. Kreider (1827-1903). He lived along the Old Factory Road (Millport Road today) where Harry Nissley now lives. He was the father of "Early John" Kreider, a former church trustee. Tobias R. was the grandfather of Mrs. J. W. (Emma) Denlinger.

Abraham B. Groff (1841-1921). He lived on what is now the Henry Gemperling farm and later with his daughter, Mrs. Aaron (Mary) Denlinger at their home on the Strasburg Pike near Bonholtzer's Mill. He was the father of Mrs. Martin (Ida) Good and the grandfather of Cleatus Doutrich, Paul G. Landis, and of

two of our Sunday school superintendents—the two Earls.

David B. Groff (1849-1934). He was the father of Lissie K. and Naomi K. Groff of East King Street and of Elmer K. Groff of the Old Philadelphia Pike. He was also the brother of the above mentioned Abraham B. Groff.

Benjamin D. Heller (1849-1912). He lived on one of the farms then occupied by Hellers near Eden, the one where the Christ Fagers now reside. He was the father of Mrs. Christ (Laura) Fager, of Harvey and John Heller. He was the grandfather of Clyde, Elizabeth, and Mary Heller.

J. Frank Landis (1849-1906). He was the father of Mrs. (Landis) Stella Heller and David L. Landis, our minister. J. Frank was the leader of the singers and, we are told, sat at the end of the long table with his back to the congregation.

George D. Lefever (1842-1917), known as "Hollow George" Lefever. He farmed on the Old Factory Road where Clarence Neff now lives. Later he moved off the farm to where Clair Ressler now lives. He was a great-uncle to our minister Harry S. Lefever.

Aaron D. Landis (1856-1941) He was a son of Preacher John L. Landis of Mellingers. Aaron was the father of Sanford, and Aaron—one of our present church trustees. Aaron D. was also one of our very early Sunday-school superintendents. These are only the names of those "sitters" for whom we have reasonable proof. Undoubtedly there were more. We did not attempt to name all the children or grandchildren of the above, only a few to point us to representatives of their families as of today. The writer enjoyed the help and personal contacts with some of our older people to assemble this, and would welcome corrections or additional information on this subject.

This old table, which saw so many years of the Lord's service, is being used by one of our Sunday-school classes in our basement today. The singers' table was the general thing in our Lancaster Conference practice in the yesteryears of long ago.—*Mellingers Notes*, June 17, 1956.

